

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PARIS
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AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY BERN
INFO USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 120923

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, ETEL, UPU

SUBJECT: MEMBERSHIP OF TERRITORIES IN UNIVERSAL POSTAL
UNION (UPU)

1. FYI: DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS SERVICE IN FRENCH
POST OFFICE (P. LE SAUX) HAS UNOFFICIALLY INFORMED USPS
INTERNATIONAL POSTAL AFFAIRS DIRECTOR STOCK BY LETTER THAT
FRANCE IS CONSIDERING RELINQUISHING ITS UPU MEMBERSHIP
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(PRESUMABLY INCLUDING BOTH VOTE AND CONTRIBUTION) FOR THE

FRENCH TERRITORIES. AS U.S. ALSO HAS MEMBERSHIP IN UPU FOR ITS TERRITORIES, LE SAUX ASKED FOR THE U.S. POSITION ON THIS QUESTION.

2. IN MAKING HIS REQUEST LE SAUX RECALLED THE TREATMENT GIVEN TO TERRITORIAL MEMBERSHIP AT THE ITU PLENIPOTENTIARY CONFERENCE IN TORREMOLINOS IN 1973 (WHEN CONVENTION WAS AMENDED TO DELETE PROVISION FOR SEPARATE TERRITORIAL MEMBERSHIP OVER U.S. OPPOSITION). HE NOTED THERE IS A GOOD CHANCE THE NEXT UPU CONGRESS WILL TAKE A SIMILAR ACTION AND THAT FRANCE WILL PROBABLY WISH TO ANTICIPATE THIS ACTION AND TAKE STEPS TO PREEMPT IT. END FYI.

3. THE USG IS INCLINED TO AGREE WITH THE FRENCH VIEW OF THE PROBLEM. WE WOULD LIKE TO AVOID CONSIDERATION OF POLITICAL

PROBLEMS IN A TECHNICAL FORUM IF THE ISSUE CAN BE RESOLVED WITH SMALL COST.

4. AT THE SAME TIME WE FEEL WE SHOULD AT LEAST TELL OTHER GOVERNMENTS, WHICH NOW HAVE TERRITORIAL MEMBERSHIPS IN THE UPU, THE TREND OF OUR THINKING ON TERRITORIAL MEMBERSHIP AND SEEK THEIR VIEWS.

5. UNLESS THEY DEEM IT COUNTERPRODUCTIVE, ACTION ADDRESSEES SHOULD APPROACH APPROPRIATE OFFICE IN FOREIGN MINISTRY ON THIS SUBJECT, TELL THEM - WITHOUT REFERENCE TO THE FRENCH APPROACH - WE ARE CONSIDERING TERMINATION OF THE MEMBERSHIP (VOTE AND CONTRIBUTION) WE NOW HOLD IN THE UPU FOR AMERICAN TERRITORIES AND INCLUSION OF THEM UNDER OUR OWN MEMBERSHIP, AND ASK WHETHER HOST GOVERNMENT HAS ANY VIEWS ON THIS SUBJECT. A REPORT OF THE CONVERSATION WOULD BE APPRECIATED. WE WOULD HOPE THAT ALL NATIONS HAVING SEPARATE TERRITORIAL MEMBERSHIPS WOULD FOLLOW A UNIFIED APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM.

6. THE ACTION WE ARE CONSIDERING WOULD INVOLVE GIVING NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL OF THE U.S. TERRITORIES MEMBERSHIP TO THE SWISS IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 12 OF THE UPU CONSTITUTION. WITHDRAWAL WOULD BECOME EFFECTIVE ONE YEAR AFTER SUCH NOTICE WAS GIVEN. AT THAT TIME, THE U.S. WOULD CONFIDENTIAL

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NOTIFY THE SWISS UNDER ARTICLE 23 THAT OUR ADHERENCE TO THE UPU INCLUDES THOSE AREAS FOR WHICH WE PREVIOUSLY HAD SEPARATE MEMBERSHIP AND FOR WHICH WE HAVE INTERNATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY.

7. FOR BERN: PASS ABOVE TO EDGAR STOCK, OF USPS WHO WILL WISH TO DISCUSS THIS SUBJECT WITH LE SAUX WHILE STOCK IS IN EUROPE FOR UPU MEETINGS. KISSINGER

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